

the Royal Navy edited by W. Laird Clowes, which appeared in 1898, deals with the period covered by Macaulay. Finally, the numerous articles contributed by Sir John Laughton to the Dictionary of National Biography have superseded Charnock's lives of the naval commanders of the seventeenth century. In the light of these later authorities it is not surprising to find that the naval part of Macaulay's History needs rewriting. To produce a satisfactory account of naval affairs from 1688 to 1697 would necessitate consulting not only these authorities, but the mass of unprinted naval documents now in the Public Record Office. All that can be done here is to elucidate a few of the more important points.

In the third chapter of his History Macaulay describes the condition of the navy at the close of Charles II's reign. 'It had sunk', he says, 'into degradation and decay such as would be almost incredible were it not certified to us by the independent and concurring evidence of witnesses whose authority is beyond exception.' But it is not just to lay the blame entirely on the King. Macaulay says that Parliament had always been 'bountiful to profusion when the interests of the navy were concerned/ but that the 'liberality of the nation had been made fruitless by the vices of the government/ But the fact is that the sum voted by Parliament during the first four

years of the
King's reign was never sufficient to defray the
cost of the
navy, and then the Dutch war came and
overwhelmed the
navy with debts which hampered it for the rest
of the reign.
The fanaticism of the nation was more
detrimental to the
navy than the vices of the King. Immediately
after the
Restoration the administration of the navy
was bad;
thanks to the Duke of York and Mr. Pepys, it
was greatly

*1, 289 (iii).